UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

(Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Editor, 1880-1918)

John Haynes Holmes
Editor in Chief

Louis L. Mann
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The Triumph of the Copybook

By H. R. MUSSEY

The Ordeal of Fire in India

PART II

By G. B. HALSTEAD

The Great Betrayal

By SYDNEY STRONG

Unitarianism and Contemporary Life

By VREST ORTON and
RAYMOND H. PALMER

VOLUME CIX NUMBER 22

Chicago, August 29, 1932

PRICE TEN CENTS

UNITY

Established 1878

Published Weekly October to June — *Subscription $3.00*
Published Bi-Weekly July to September — *Single Copies 10 cents*

UNITY PUBLISHING CO., Abraham Lincoln Centre, 700 Oakwood Blvd., Chicago, Ill.
"Entered as Second-Class Matter, July 30, 1931, at the Post office at Chicago, Illinois, under Act of March 3, 1879"

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The Field

"The world is my country, to do good is my Religion."

Impressions

By Father Verrier Elwin*

On May 27th I came down from my jungle retreat to Bombay, intending to go to England as soon as I could in order to tell people something of what was happening here. With this end in view I began visiting and talking with as many friends as I could—not only Congress workers, but business men (Indian and English), missionaries, Parsees, Muslims, workers among the untouchables, and members of the "Liberal Party." I stayed a week at the "Servants of India Society" in Poona, the center of the "co-operating" section of Indian politicians. But now I have had to cancel my proposed journey, since Government would only allow me a passport to England, but would not extend it so as to permit me to return. I am too wedded to India and the poor of India to risk a possibly long exile from the work which I have most at heart. And so I am staying on here but I thought I should at least jot down on paper some of the impressions that I will not now be able to give you in person.

(1) Has the Government's repressive policy succeeded? I remember a high official saying to me last January, "We are out to smash the Congress to bits, to discredit it, ruin it, so that it will never lift up its head again." But far from discrediting Congress, Government itself has been the chief contributor to its growing prestige, for you only set a romantic halo about any popular movement if you put it in jail. Government has crushed many—but not all—of the outward demonstrations of political life in the country. There are none of the almost epic features which have marked previous Satyagraha campaigns. The repression has been ruthless and complete. Congress may not have succeeded in paralyzing the administration—but it has succeeded in disturbing the morale and conscience of the Government. For what can be more deeply impressive to the imagination than the dignity of the silent suffering of the tens of thousands behind prison bars? This is the real "offensive" of the Congress—this harmless, voiceless offering of pain and deprivation for the conversion of England.

(2) For let there be no mistake about the sufferings of the prisoners. A Deputy-Commissioner said to me the other day, "Whatever we may say, this jail life is a very severe experience for cultured or well-to-do people." The health of many of India's noblest and greatest is being affected; Pandit Jewaharlal has constant fever; Seth Jamnalal Bajaj is fighting a growing weakness in the rigors of

*Father Elwin is an Anglican priest, of course an Englishman, and a friend of the Mahatma. His testimony is of the first order of importance.—EDITOR.

(*Continued on page* 351)

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

Volume CIX MONDAY, AUGUST 29, 1932 Number 22

"A summer night descending cool and green
And dark on daytime's dust and stress and heat.
The ways of Death are soothing and serene,
And all the ways of Death are grave and sweet."

When we are very young Death seems a dreadful thing, not to be dwelt upon; when it comes into the mind it is hurriedly thrust out again. But life is one long process of getting tired, as Samuel Butler said, and midway of the process we cease to regard Death as the fantastical figure in the morality play and come to think of him as a grave and sweet companion, whose hand we shall not shrink from when it is laid upon our arm. And if it is spring when we go with others to a graveside, the birth in death that is all about us tempers the sadness of the hour. The green of the turf is deepening, life is coursing through the stark limbs of the trees; if there comes a flow of rain, each drop means life to a seed that waits the moisture. It is a kindly earth to which the loved friend is committed—the great mother who was never far from George Meredith's thoughts,

"And we go,
And we drop like the fruits of the tree,
Even we,
Even so."

—*Bert Leston Taylor* in "The East Window."

The death of Edith Lloyd Jones, Managing Editor of UNITY, is an occasion of serious loss to this paper, and of deep personal sorrow to all members of its staff. Associated for many years with Abraham Lincoln Center, Mrs. Jones was closely identified with UNITY as assistant editor from 1898 until the time of her marriage to Dr. Jones in 1915 and after. Following his death in 1918, in the dreadful days of America's participation in the Great War, Mrs. Jones took responsible charge of publication, and "carried on" with undaunted courage and good cheer. That UNITY survived this critical period of its career is due to many friends, especially to the little Chicago group, but most of all, we feel, to Mrs. Jones as she stood week after week at her managerial post. With the passing of the crisis and the coming of more normal times, she continued steadfastly at her task; and by her selection of material, her fine sense of distribution and arrangement, her shrewd discernment and exquisite taste, did more to create and sustain the new UNITY than most of our readers have ever realized. It was perhaps her noblest achievement, a reflection of her noblest qualities of character, that she transferred to the new editors all the loyalty and devotion that she had given so unstintingly to Dr. Jones himself. Seldom can a wife and comrade see successors step into her husband's shoes without regret, jealousy, ill-will; but not a trace of these not unnatural emotions found their way even unconsciously into Mrs. Jones's soul. Her love of UNITY had a unique and beautiful personal quality. It was to her much more than a paper, or even an institution—it was a kind of living organism into which she rejoiced to build her life. A monument to Jenkin Lloyd Jones, it must now be a monument to her as well. With deep sorrow at her parting, we continue on our way strengthened, purified and happy in the memory of so true a comrade and so dear a friend.

On the evening (August 8th) when Secretary of State Stimson was delivering his remarkable speech on the Briand-Kellogg Treaty, a certain man was "listening in" on the radio in a little seashore town of Maine. As this man, Salmon O. Levinson, heard the Secretary's voice borne to his ears over the distant waves of air, he must have had the curious impression that he was listening to his own words. For if Mr. Levinson, the father of the Outlawry of War, had been making this speech himself, he would not, as he could not, have spoken otherwise. In saying this, we are not seeking to disparage the Secretary of State. On the contrary, we are giving him the highest praise at our bestowal. For Mr. Stimson has learned what we believe Mr. Kellogg has never learned, but what Mr. Levinson saw with prophetic vision from the beginning—that the Paris Pact, as it has come to be called, involved the full embodiment of the principle of the outlawry of war as a crime under the law of nations. Ever since that Pact was signed, it has been argued by doubting souls that it meant nothing, that it was mere "words—words," that international law remained what it had always been, the safeguard and the sanction of war. But now comes the American Secretary of State, with all the authority of his great office, and declares that when the nations of the world solemnly covenanted together to "renounce war as an instrument of national policy," they were rewriting international law, whether they knew it or not, in terms of peace. It is the judgment of Mr. Stimson, in other words, that *war is now outlawed;* and in this momentous dictum he is voicing, of course, no mere personal opinion, but the decision and will of the United States. It is not too much to say that the Secretary's speech this month marks a new epoch in modern history.

Coming just three years after President Hoover's pronouncement to the world of the Briand-Kellogg Treaty, it may be said at last to complete what was so nobly begun at Paris.

Secretary Stimson's address, above referred to, was remarkable not only for its definition of the full implication of the Paris Pact, but also for its definition of the method by which this implication can be, and is actually being, made effective. He showed, in other words, how the Outlawry of War is being "implemented" not by armed force but by the consenting will of nations. That this interpretation was no mere statement of a personal opinion on Mr. Stimson's part but a solemn affirmation of public policy on the part of the present administration, was proved by the President's superb statement on the same lines in his speech of acceptance (August 11th). We quote Mr. Hoover's historic words:

> We have given leadership in transforming the Kellogg-Briand Pact from an inspiring outlawry of war to an organized instrument of peaceful settlements backed by definite mobilization of world public opinion against aggression. We shall, under the spirit of that Pact, consult with other nations in times of emergency to promote world peace. We shall enter no agreements committing us to any future course of action or which call for use of force to preserve peace. Above all, I have projected a new doctrine into international affairs, the doctrine that we do not and never will recognize title to possession of territory gained in violation of the peace pacts.

Here is the way out from war to peace as envisioned years ago by Mr. Levinson in his great doctrine of Outlawry, and as now tested and approved by the nations in recurring international crises. Mr. Hoover is correct when he declares that this doctrine was "accepted by all the nations of the world on a recent critical occasion, and within the last few days has been accepted again by all the nations of the Western Hemisphere." Outlawry as thus "implemented" by public opinion and not by armed force, in other words, turned back the tide of war in China, and is now turning it back again in South America. Mr. Hoover's acceptance and application of Outlawry is a public service of the highest order, and may well rank him among the great peace statesmen of all time.

When Owen D. Young went to visit Governor Roosevelt, he came away with warm praise and endorsement of the Democratic candidate. Yet it is on his alleged record as an opponent of the Power Trust that Mr. Roosevelt is commended to the West! It was not so long ago that Vincent Astor, clad in the millions of his vast real estate holdings, made a pilgrimage to the successor of Jefferson, and on his return proclaimed, "Mr. Roosevelt is no radical!" Yet it is this same Mr. Roosevelt who is announced to sweep the western states as the heir of William Jennings Bryan. More and more obvious is becoming the clever game of the Democrat campaign-managers. Their candidate, always amiable, is to be two-faced, like ancient Janus. With one face he will look west—and this face will be fierce, prophetic, demagogic. With the other face he will look east—and this face will be placid, benign, reactionary. The idea in other words, is to present Roosevelt to the discontented West as the courageous progressive, who would lead the people forward to new realms of radical reform; and at the same time to present this same man to the East as the staunch conservative, safe, sane, and sober, true friend of existing institutions. It is a shrewd scheme, and, with masses of voters still content to line up and be counted for the old parties, it may well succeed. But its patent sham is thoroughly characteristic of the irresponsible and unscrupulous ambition of the New York Governor, and a true reflection of American political morality. Personally we prefer the candid courage and fervent forthrightness of Bryan, who candidated unashamed and openly for free silver, and, when he turned from the West to the East, announced that he was invading "the enemy's country." It is said that this remark defeated the "Peerless Leader." Perhaps! But even so, there are those who prefer an honest defeat to a dishonest victory.

The breakdown of British policy in India is now complete. "The end of three years' effort to make a constitution by agreement," as the *New Statesman and Nation* (London) puts it, came with the resignation, on July 8th, from the Consultative Committee of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar, two leading Indian Moderate delegates to the Round Table Conference; the withdrawal, on July 9th, of further cooperation by the thirteen Hindu Moderate delegates to the Round Table Conference; and the approval of this action, on July 10th, by the Indian National Liberal Federation and the refusal by this body of further cooperation with this Government. Thus crashes to ruin all the fine edifice that the Empire has been building up by every pretension and deceit since the first days of the Simon Commission! It is to be noted that Sapru and Jayakar and the Moderates generally represent no following of importance in India. But the group included men of great personal distinction, and unquestionably sincere in their endeavor to work out the Indian problem with justice and amity. Now that these men have lost faith in Britain, and reluctantly have set their feet upon the pathway of non-cooperation upon which Gandhi and the Congress entered years ago, the last important bond of contact between the two countries is broken. "The Government," says the Manchester *Guardian*, "is now cut off from politically-conscious India; it will have to proceed—in the face of bitter hostility of every kind of Indian politician, every kind of Indian newspaper, every kind of organization whereby public opinion is influenced." That the Government can "proceed" under these conditions to any goal worth reaching is of course impossible.

All attempts at compromise, negotiation, surrender are now ended. The fight to the finish has begun between Gandhi and the Indian people of all shades of opinion on the one hand, and the Tory Government of MacDonald on the other. The outcome of this fight cannot be doubtful. When the Mahatma's prison-door is next opened, it will be to liberty not merely for himself but for his country.

The *Christian Century* is not convinced by our argument (see UNITY, August 1st) that Franklin D. Roosevelt was nominated very largely as the result of an anti-Smith conspiracy, engineered by Hearst, McAdoo, and Garner, which was based fundamentally upon prejudice against Roman Catholicism. This does not surprise nor greatly disappoint us. But surprise, disappointment, and numerous other emotions stir within us when we find the *Christian Century* soberly declaring that "it is perfectly possible for one to believe that the administrative system of Roman Catholicism (not its faith or its form of worship) makes it inadvisable to elect a Roman Catholic to the presidency, and yet not be a bigot." That word, "inadvisable," is a clever word to use as a cloak for bigotry. Suppose we translate this sentence, and make it say frankly what the Editor wanted to say—that a Roman Catholic candidate for the presidency should be opposed *as a Roman Catholic,* and thus shut out of the White House *simply and solely because of his religious affiliations!* If this is not "bigotry," why keep this word in the dictionary? If this is sound policy, why not amend the Constitution making Protestantism a qualification for the presidency, so that Americans may do openly and honestly what they now do covertly? If the peril is so great, why limit the ban to the presidency? Why not save the nation by extending it to the Supreme Court, the Cabinet, Congress, and all national, state, county, city, and village officials? Why not be really logical as well as honest, and disfranchise Catholic citizens, lest they capture the country and annex it to the Vatican? We are reminded that there was a time when Englishmen thought and talked this way. That was the time when Roman Catholics were not allowed to be ministers, or even to sit in Parliament, and all communicants of Rome were disfranchised. This nonsense—and bigotry!—were done away years ago in the Catholic Emancipation acts. We would respectfully ask the Editor of the *Christian Century*—does he think these Emancipation acts were a mistake?—and would he have England repeal them, and join America in returning to the dark days of religious persecution?

The Triumph of the Copybook

There seems to be something, after all, in the old idea that tribulation is good for us. At any rate, the present disastrous state of affairs is compelling people to see the qualities by which the world lives, and those by which it dies. It is not only that the depression has put into their proper place the advertising salesmen, the publicity men, the industrial oracles who knew everything because they happened to have made a million dollars, the forecasters, the university schools of business administration. It is indeed an unqualified blessing to have got all this fraternity removed from the front seat of the social bandwagon to their fitting position on the lowest hind step; but the cost has been outrageously high. Three years ago the United States was mad with the idea of getting—largely something for nothing, as witness our lunatic speculation of 1928 and 1929—but in any case, with the idea of getting. The everyday man wanted to get an automobile and a radio and an electric refrigerator; the young college graduate wanted to get a job selling bonds so as to own a snappy little suburban place and drive a big car and belong to the country club as soon as possible; the lordly business genius whose word was law to his office force and gospel to a gaping world that hung on his lips—he wanted to get a railroad or a string of factories or maybe a concession to take a hundred million barrels of oil out of the ground in some out-of-the-way part of the earth. The old things were gone. We had reached the place, we learned, where a universal greed was to be satisfied by the mass production of needless goods forced on unwilling buyers by high-pressure salesmanship. The man who dissented from it all was a grouch or just plain queer; he ought to go back into the discredited nineteenth century, where he belonged.

Today there is a striking change. Some of my college friends tell me that they do not know a single young person who expects ever to "make a lot of money." If it be true, it is an unqualified gain. Our young people may have a chance to learn and to do something that is worth while and that they will find genuinely rewarding. They had little enough chance in the days when everything and everybody was teaching them how to get something and to get it quick. Perhaps our experience of the horrors of widespread unemployment may even teach us collectively how much more important it is to assure every man the opportunity to do what he can do than to afford the more intelligent, the better educated, the more wolfish a chance to get by cleverness or luck an undue share of the things turned out by the common endeavor.

After all, the moral and religious teachers of the world have no reason to be ashamed of their job, however much reason they have to be ashamed of the way they do it. Certain moralities, as old as the human race, have to be taught and re-taught. They are no

less important because our smart young men knew them in the cradle, and therefore dismissed them as platitudes unworthy of their august attention. Those of us who believe that the universe is a moral order rather than a moral chaos cannot use the present situation better than by insisting on the importance of those same platitudinous moralities. The young people who are to shape the post-depression world will have need of them. Let us glance at a few of them.

First, and perhaps chiefly important in our western world, the contemporary eclipse of our capitalism, its bankruptcy in face of a well-nigh unprecedented demand on it, is simply fresh evidence of a fact that every intelligently thoughtful man has known right along: no successful and enduring social order can be built on a sole foundation of glorified getting. A scheme of organized universal selfishness, or even of exclusive self-interest, however it may operate under favoring conditions, inevitably breaks down under severe strain. Capitalism collapsed in the war; it has collapsed under the depression. It is not the activities of the hustling go-getters, out to grab what they can, by which we live, but the patient, industrious, habitual, yet unconscious cooperation of those hundreds of millions of men and women who jointly labor all over the world. Because that cooperation has become world-wide, the obstructions to its successful working imposed by the action of individual and collective greed, ordinarily justified by economic theory and sanctified by patriotism, have become calamitous in their results. Practically without dissent thoughtful men agree that the lowering of tariffs and the abolition of exchange restrictions, as a means to the revival of international trade, are essential if the people of the world are again to work and live as they have been used to do. In face of this agreement, the nations of the world, practically without exception, have continued to build their tariff walls higher and higher and to pile up more and more severe exchange restrictions. We are now witnessing an astounding reversion to barter as the only practicable means of getting the goods that must be had.

Why this astounding contradiction? Because the interests of the organized producers, naturally enough determined to get for their goods a price at least high enough to insure their continued existence, override the interests of the whole people, who must live by work and trade. This individual and group selfishness appears to be driving our contemporary civilization to ruin because it is making it impossible for that civilization to maintain the material conditions of its own existence. But the principle of organized self-interest is the basis on which the capitalism we know has been built. It therefore behooves honest men to make up their minds whether it is any longer possible to meet the necessities of our day by a scheme of production whose mainspring is simply individual getting. Some of us, at any rate, are satisfied that it is not possible, and that our most pressing and difficult social task is to replace our system of acquisitive capitalism with a system of productive cooperation. That task is not simply economic, but moral as well.

A second obvious lesson emerges from our present distresses. Since prosperity vanished we have learned that, however it be with the individual, the community as a whole has got to live by work, not by shrewd trading. So we cry out for an order that will release the creative energies in common men, and our eyes turn toward Russia, with the bright promises of communism. If any new economic scheme of itself could solve this problem, surely communism ought to do it; for the individual under communism sees the fruit of his labor harvested for the common good and not for the benefit of an alien profit-maker. Some of the results in Russia are encouraging in high degree. Yet the Russians, under stress of the need for work and production, temporarily reverted to the organized self-interest of capitalism in the New Economic Policy of 1921. Last year they carried on an extraordinary drive for piece-work, with its emphasis on individual getting and individual reward. Today they are making extensive use of many devices that are no less an appeal to individual self-interest because they are part of a system of communism.

Capitalism, for all its defects, has done much to discipline men automatically to those habits of patient industry by which the world must live. The Russian experience already shows clearly enough the need for something to take the place of that automatic discipline. The moralist has his work cut out for him in Russia as well as in the United States. Maybe in certains aspects the task is easier there. In any case, Russia's material problem, like our own, is not simply a matter of economic organization, but likewise a question of moral habits.

A contrast between Russia and the west points my third moral. A dozen years ago the Russian leaders were faced with a condition of ignorance, destitution and chaos surpassing in intensity, if not in extent and complexity, anything we know at present in the western world. They attacked their task with a courage and faith that have already brought about astounding results. One need not be a communist to admire the singleness of purpose and the sturdy belief in themselves by which the communists have brought about the marvels of social construction in Russia. By contrast, the striking feature of our life today is its lack of courage and faith. It is specially notable in this country, and particularly among those business and political leaders who are commonly regarded as our great men. For the most part they appear to be in a state of blue funk, and it is only the persistence, the quiet industry, the patience, the resourcefulness of the common man and woman that keep us going at all. If there is anything that the

United States needs today it is just plain everyday courage, boldness in planning to meet present and future needs, readiness to welcome necessary change, daring to initiate and carry out new policies. But most of our so-called leaders exhibit none of these qualities. The more need, then, for the rest of us to cultivate the characteristics they so conspicuously lack, to keep our eyes open for every manifestation of such powers in those younger spirits who must be in the forefront of the necessary constructive work of the future.

It is reasonable to believe that we are on the eve of great times. The blatant days of prosperity ballyhoo are, for the time being at least, safely behind us. Ordinary people are beginning once more to consider and to question. It is a day therefore for the thinker, the teacher, maybe the prophet. And despite all we have learned of the new psychology, it is a day when the old moralities are once more coming into their own, because they embody truths by which men live and without which they cannot live. In face of the accumulated and accumulating failure of societies based on wrong principles, it is time for thoughtful men to thank God and take courage.

H. R. MUSSEY.

The Ordeal of Fire In India

A Series of Four Articles

II

9. *A Picture of Colossal Injustice.*

The picture I have painted for you thus far is one of acute land hunger, continually getting more acute, absurdly small, uneconomic holdings of land, by tenants, most of whom have not security of tenure; a wicked mal-distribution of wealth, both of land and money, the great majority of it concentrated in the hands of a "functionless and parasitic class of landlords, who perform no economic service whatever." Not a pleasant picture, is it? Voiceless, it screams its story of callous injustice; inanimate, it seethes and writhes with the indescribable pain and suffering of countless helpless, meek, human souls. But there is more before the picture is complete.

10. *Effects of World Depression on Indian Peasants.*

As you well know, Mr. Man-of-the-Street, the price of agricultural produce has fallen considerably, all over the world, during the past few years. The plight of the farmers of our own country is quite bad enough to be a silent but effective witness to the truth of this statement. But if the average small western farmer has been hard hit by the fall in price of agricultural produce on one hand and the rise in the cost of living on the other, what can we expect to happen and is happening to the poor Indian farmer, who, in the most prosperous times merely drags along under his many burdens in a semi-starved condition. Between January and December, 1930, the value, in India, of wheat, barley, gram and rice fell by about 50%. In January, wheat, barley, gram and rice sold at 8, 10.50, 7.75 and 5.50 seers (about two pounds) to a rupee respectively, while in December of the same year these basic grains could be had for 15.14, 25.04, 15.34 and 10.23 seers per rupee, respectively. Prices continued falling straight through the next harvests in 1931, which brings us up to the period with which we are now vitally concerned. It should be added that many cultivators had to sell their products at figures considerably lower than these quoted, because of competition, difficulty or inability to transport such cheap crops to advantageous markets, where the standard rates prevailed, etc. Since the cultivators were already losing money on the crops, how could they afford to ship them even to the nearest markets? Along with this unparalleled slump in prices of agricultural produce, the cost of labor, machinery, seeds, clothing, etc., had risen. Also, there was nearly the same amount of rent to be paid to the landlord, who being pressed by the Government for his revenue, was beginning to terrorize the poor tenant, as we shall see presently. The usual rental rates range between 4 and 6 rupees per acre per harvest. The Government, in view of the hard times, had sanctioned reductions, but I shall leave further mention of these until a later section. Suffice it to say here that these reductions were totally inadequate, and nowhere near, in proportion, to the rise in the cost of living and the fall in prices. The lot of the tenant became a desperate one. Overburdened with debt as he was and is, saddled with the numerous obligations to give presents on many occasions to all the village officials and the landlords and to render a certain period of free labor to the landlord, he was now faced with positive losses as the result of his labors on his scanty lands. In three of the largest districts in the U. P. the average cultivator was faced with a "substantial deficit," ranging from Rs. 54 to Rs. 68, $18.00 to $22.50, a huge sum for him, and large enough, if borrowed, and that was his only course, at the prevalent rate of interest, stretching from 30% to 125% to put him in debt for the rest of his and his children's children's lives. In order to make this tragic loss even clearer, let us take, for illustration a wheat field which produces a single crop. The rent of such a holding averages Rs. 16 ($5.25) per bigha, while the produce is 4 maunds per bigha, which would bring Rs. 8 ($2.75) in the wholesale market, if the tenant were lucky enough to get in there. Again, on a double crop field, rice, for instance, the total value of the produce is Rs. 12-4 ($4.00), while the rent is Rs. 16 ($5.00) per bigha.

11. *The British Must Have Oil!*

Now, my Commoner friend, you have the whole ghastly picture. Tenants being slowly ground to death between the forces of land hunger, minute, uneconomic holdings, mal-distribution of wealth, rapacious landlords, extracting the last pound of flesh, staggering drops in prices, increased cost of living, losses on harvests, and those eternal spectres that haunt the poor of any land, ignorance, disease and fear. Where was this benevolent alien Government all this time and in this terrible state of things, you ask. It was there, but somewhere beyond the blue. To the villager, ignorant and humble as he is, His Majesty's Government was but some great silent, efficient machine which ran on and on, with cold disregard for such foolish things as

mercy, justice and truth. Needed and wanted only the oil and fuel of revenue in order to continue to turn out its high-salaried civil and military products, each one like the other, perfect little bureaucrats. If it seemed to heed the cries for mercy and justice that drifted on the dust from the village, it was because the machine had begun to creak and groan for more oil, since the distress among the farmers had begun to affect the revenue and rent. But the Machine *must have oil,* so Government terrorism was added to landlord terrorism in a supreme effort to wring from the tenants what they did not have. This all may seem greatly exaggerated to you, Mr. Man-of-the-Street, but it is as true as truth, as you shall learn, or as the mute villages of India testify.

12. *The Indian National Congress—the Peasants' Friend.*

To whom should or could the tenants turn for help? Surely, not to this cold, impersonal Machine, which had now begun to grind them worse than ever. Surely, not to their landlords—their deadly enemies, if man ever had enemies. But to whom, then? The Congress answered the question by turning to them and throwing its all into their fight for mercy and justice. It was embodying in action the words of the Mahatma, "There is no rest for us unless vital freedom for the villagers of India is won."

It clearly had become "the paramount duty" of the Congress, "to seek some method of relief," and to "adopt" some "defensive, direct action," the suspension of civil disobedience notwithstanding. As wrote Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, in the Congress Report bearing his name, "The Congress would be guilty of serious dereliction of duty if it failed to stand by them (the cultivators) at this juncture." Let us see what the Congress did, and then how the Government, this benevolent, Christian Government, reacted!

13. *The Congress Turns to Help the Peasants.*

In March, 1931, when the Congress once more became a legal organization and its members regained their freedom (we must remember that up to this date the Congress was declared an illegal body and most of its leaders were in jail) it at once entered into negotiation with the Provincial as well as the National Government concerning the plight of the tenants of the U. P. Gandhiji had been hurriedly summoned to the U. P., both to consult with the Congress leaders there and to see the Governor, Sir Malcolm Hailey—the real brains of the present Indian Administration, a man who is the reincarnation of Lord Curzon. Although this good gentleman gave the Mahatma a sympathetic hearing and promised to see what could be done, nothing tangible or practical in the form of relief measures for the tenants resulted. After his interview with the Governor, Gandhiji issued a Manifesto to the tenants of the U. P. telling them the relief measures advocated by the Congress on their behalf, and at the same time instructing them to pay as much rent as they could possibly afford to do. Let me quote parts of this remarkable Manifesto, for it not only sets forth the Congress position on relief measures, but is a fine illustration of the unique methods employed by Gandhi and the Congress in attempting the settlement of difficult situations.

To the Kisans of the United Provinces:

. . . the unprecedented fall this year in the prices of the crops usually grown by you made your condition infinitely worse than in normal times. Congress workers reported that you were utterly unable to pay full rents . . . inquiries disclosed a serious state of affairs. It was found that the price of your gross produce had fallen to such an extent that the sales were not enough to pay rents. It was in this connection that I came to Naini Tal to see His Excellency the Governor. His Excellency gave me a patient hearing and we fully discussed the situation. I told him that since Congress workers had assured me that the relief hitherto announced by the Government of the United Provinces was hardly equal to the actual distress. And I submitted certain proposals which he kindly promised to consider.

Concentrated work was done, and it was found that there should be a remission for the year 1931 of eight annas in the rupee in the case of statutory and non-occupancy tenants (not having security of land tenure), and four annas in the rupee in the case of occupancy.

I have been told that in some districts the tenants are in a position to do with less reduction. Some districts, again, were hard hit by local calamities (floods, drought, locusts, etc.). The suggested reduction would naturally therefore not apply to all the districts. The Congress expects every tenant to pay as early as possible all the rent he can.

Let me warn you against listening to the advice if it has reached you, that you have no need to pay the Zemindars any rent at all. Congressmen cannot, we do not, seek to injure the Zemindars. We aim not at destruction of property. We aim only at its lawful use.

You have complained of very harsh treatment by or on behalf of some landlords. The Congress is trying and will try to investigate all your complaints. But let it also be owned that some tenants have gone astray, and committed murderous assaults. These acts spoil the fair name of kisans, harm their cause and impair the usefulness of the Congress for service.

Please remember that the Congress aims at reaching *Purna Swaraj* (the substance of independence) through Truth and Non-Violence and it will fail in so far as the Kisans fail to observe these two cardinal principles. You are millions. When millions become untruthful and violent, it will mean self-destruction. You will, therefore, suffer injury without retaliation. You have now perhaps learnt that the best way of resisting injury is never to injure the injurer, but ever to refuse, no matter how much suffering the refusal costs us, to do his will when we know it to be wrong. I am

Your friend and servant,

M. K. GANDHI.

This Manifesto, as all of Gandhiji's, reads like a Pauline Epistle, written by the great Apostle to one of his little flocks in a distant land. It certainly does not bear the earmarks of the conventional politician's document.

14. *Congress Formula for Rent and Revenue Remissions.*

The Congress formula for immediate relief, as set forth in this Manifesto, was remission in rent by the landlords of annas eight in the rupee for non-occupancy tenants, and annas four per rupee for occupancy tenants. Subsequently, the Congress declared that all arrears in rent should be written off and all ejectments for inability to pay rent should be cancelled. Also, it stated that the revenue paid by the landlords to the Government should be proportionately reduced, in order to allow for the reduction in rent. This was a weak spot in the Congress programme, but it was mostly an expedient measure. Although Mahatma and the Congress hold nothing against the Zemindar as a man, they do understand fully the terrific injustice that is part and parcel of the present system of land tenure, and there is hardly a bit of doubt that in a free India, this wicked system will either be completely abolished, or greatly modified. Mahatma Gandhi is such an extreme idealist that he does not think in terms of new systems, but rather in terms of new individuals, who, when made new, can redeem even the worst system. Therefore, he and the Congress have not declared a

war on the present system of land tenure, as such, or have not proposed any other system that might work more justice and mercy to the tenant. But since most of the Congress is not dominated by such complete idealism, there is every chance that as freedom approaches it will work out a new and better system of land tenure. However, this is all by the way. Let me return and pick up the threads of my story.

The Congress formula for remission in rent had been very carefully worked out from figures of past years. It was calculated "that the present low level of prices had not been touched at any time during the present generation, and was much lower than the level of 1896-1900." Further calculation helped the Congress leaders to discover that the present prices of the staple crops were practically the same as those of 1873. Therefore, they said, Government should expect no more rent from the tenants than they received in and about the year 1873, when prices were more nearly those of the present year than those of any other year since 1873. The total rent received in the year 1873 was approximately that which would be received in the year 1931-32, if the Congress formula of remission was effected.

The Congress formula, however, went even deeper than the mere statement of remissions in rent and revenue, etc. It maintained that rent could be collected only if there was a surplus of money with the tenant, after he had paid the expenses of his crop, deducted a reasonable sum for decent living, etc. In the present crisis, it pointed out, "no matter how we may work the figures, the conclusion is irresistible that the value of the produce of an average holding will not be enough to leave any surplus with the tenants."

Now you may well raise some questions concerning the Congress formula, and point out that rents in and about the year 1873 may have been too low, land being under-assessed, or that the expenses of the Government, due to the introduction of more democratic legislative machinery had increased, etc. Therefore, you may think the Congress formula to be unfair. However, the following facts may clear up such thoughts. Sir William Hunter, a former Civil Servant in India, said as far back as the seventies, that "The Government assessment of land does not leave enough food to the cultivator to support himself and his family throughout the year." Also, while rent figures have been increased by as much as 63% between 1893-1930, the prices of staple foodstuffs have fallen as much as 300%, according to the variety of produce. The rates of agricultural wages and prices of the means of production have considerably increased since the year 1873; in fact, the latter shows a rise of from 100% to 200%, just during the last thirty years, and by a still larger percentage if one goes further back.

G. B. Halstead.

[To be continued]

The Great Betrayal—Geneva's Peace Passion Play

[From Our Special Correspondent]

I tell the story of how humanity has been betrayed in the Peace Passion Play, in which the curtain has just dropped at the end of the first Act, or "Phase."

I came back to Geneva last April—having been here previously from November to March inclusive—with certain specific objects in mind: first, to find the dominant power of control at Geneva; second, to test the principle of the irreconcilability of armed nations securing real and permanent peace; third, to promote with all my power the idea of the necessity of immediate total disarmament instead of the hopeless method of limitation and reduction; fourth, with the prayer that in some expected deadlock and period of despair, the Conference would turn to the only way to peace, namely, immediate total disarmament.

During eight months, I have been an attendant on the meetings of the Council, the Assembly, the Conference and of numerous Commissions on Land, Air, Sea and Morals. I am paying my own way and am conscious only of a desire to see the truth. To me it has been like witnessing a long Peace Passion Play—while wars, rumors of wars and revolutions were going on behind the scenes. To some conclusions I have arrived, that my friends are entitled to know:

(1) The dominant power of control lies with Britain and France—with America and Japan playing a poor third. Russia is a great power, but is ostracized, while America treats her as the Jews once treated the Samaritans—a silly policy which some day, if not reversed, will prove to be very expensive to America. Other nations are seeking to keep these two apart, not for America's good!

(2) The principle of the irreconcilable conflict between *armed* nations I have tested at all the meetings I have attended. I have found it true in every instance. This is a discovery that everyone ought to make for himself. There is always bound to come a deadlock, created by fear, suspicion, self-interest. At the present time, this July 23rd, there is a deadlock. Britain and France may call it "progress"—but, fifty other nations see in it no peace—the progress is of the rainbow variety created by words and promises. This same irreconcilable conflict will appear four, five, six months from now, and will be explained away by heated oratory.

In addition is the sinister background of suggestion—created by past history that Britain, France and Japan do not propose to surrender their present military superiority, and, apart from the cost of it, would be willing to see the present status continue for many months, perhaps many years—especially if they could control it by a "Permanent Disarmament Commission." It is easy to believe that these nations (officially) will block all moves toward substantial disarmament. This is why the "substantial" reductions of President Hoover of ⅓ or ¼ have been chloroformed. If they appear, it will be in the dissecting rooms, where the experts under the chief surgeon, Benes, will operate.

(3) It is becoming clearer to me daily that the only road that has hope of peace among men is *immediate total general disarmament,* which I repeat could be accomplished within twelve months. Germany is in a temper to do the whole job for nothing and turn the tanks into trucks. To him who says that this is fantastic, let me say, to expect real peace on earth to

issue from the empty "Resolution" solemnly arrived at, July 23, is a hundred times more fantastic!

(4) Now is the time for real peace workers to work—to promote and hold up before the delegates, to the peoples of earth, the one way, namely, total disarmament. There is, there will be, a "time of despair and disappointment." Such a time is the time to prepare the way for total disarmament. Let Britain, France, Japan and America know that total disarmament is in their hands! Other nations would follow them, as sheep follow a shepherd. Will the Big Four nations heed the call?

Closing Scenes of the Peace Passion Play

It will be a long time, before I forget the scenes in the Glass-room "G" of the League of Nations from Wednesday, July 20, 3 p. m., until Saturday, July 23, noon. The room was crowded, with 1,500 people—delegates, experts, diplomats, press, spectators. On a level floor are the delegates, experts, diplomats. Over a low rail, the floor begins to ascend slowly, where sit the press (400 perhaps) and then up under the roof come the spectators (300 perhaps). Let it be noted that the audience is a censored one. Little chance for a demonstration. A hundred or more societies possess tickets and, of course, these must possess "respectability" in order to get them. Scores of people who come to Geneva are deeply disappointed because unable to get into the most important meetings. The "people" cannot get at the meetings.

The whole caste was there, as the curtain went up on the closing scenes of the first Act. I point out some of the chief actors: on the raised platform, Henderson, captain; at his left, Drummond, chief engineer; at his right, Benes, pilot; at the right of the captain, Simon, first officer; at the left, Herriot, second officer—the two being on the floor. Next to Simon sat Nadolny of Germany. Next to Herriot Gibson, then outspoken Yen of China. Sprinkled about you noticed Miss Wooley, Motta, Sato, Litvinoff.

Britain and France have easily the strongest delegations. For instance, I noted during the lull of a translation a French quartette, leading men of France, Herriot, Boncour, Painlevé and the head of the Navy, in an earnest conversation. At the same time, Simon was consulting Hailsham, Secretary of War, Londonderry, Secretary of Air and Samuel, one of the ablest of Britain's financiers. It is impossible for America to be thus represented—distance alone preventing it. Distance might well be sufficient reason for not joining the League. At any critical juncture in deliberations—which often occurs—just the right man can be drawn from London or Paris.

The closing scenes opened on Wednesday afternoon, with Benes presenting the Resolution. He followed it with a long interruption, which with the translations lasted close up to the dinner-hour. This "Resolution" is the findings of the Bureau. This Bureau is the most important committee of the Conference. Every proposition must go through this door. Benes has the reputation of being one of the most "clever diplomats" in Europe. It is fair to add that he is not unfriendly to the big Powers, France and England. Benes is chairman. He is the one who opened the gate and let the "Resolution" into the Conference. He is the one who watched it carefully, ready to give battle to every attack or amendment—the one, to whom the "Resolution" after the three days of airing, was carefully consigned, and it will be this Bureau, that will act for the Conference during the long vacation, and get other Resolutions ready for the Conference—if any are prepared.

This Resolution stated what had been accomplished to date, along with many promises that the Conference might expect. As a matter of fact, very little has been accomplished in the way of reduction. This is known to everybody, and items need not be recorded. Chemical and bacteriological warfare are prohibited. Ditto, bombing of civilian populations. This latter is so tied up with intimations that after all the civilian populations will not be safe. Many other important matters are mentioned in the Resolution—tanks, big guns, collectives, navies—but so vaguely and in the future, that there is not confidence that "substantial" reduction will be made, six months from now. In fact, I can not see why the result will be better than the findings that have been produced by the experts who have been at work, during the past five months.

This Resolution came into being because of the Proposals made by President Hoover. The cuts he proposed were really drastic—from a ¼ to a ⅓—and, Britain, France and Japan were not ready for any such thing. I have little hesitation in saying that over half of the nations would have voted for the Hoover proposals—Italy, Germany, Russia came out boldly for them. An encouraging word from Simon and Herriot would have made them practically the basis for a treaty, and in a few more months it would have been ready for signatures. But the Hoover Proposals were mulled over in private conversations by a few Big Powers, complimented and reduced, until little was left, as after a funeral, but the flowers—and Geneva has some unexcelled florists.

Gibson was influenced into agreeing to all this emasculation as being all that he could get. I note that Britain and France know what they want, and go after and get it. And he was led into doing, on the first day of the presentation of the Resolution, what seems unfortunate. Benes had presented the Resolution and interpretation, Henderson had said there would be no discussion today and was about to announce the adjournment, when Gibson arose to make a "few remarks." There was a point of order raised against him, but he rather persisted. And what did he say? He did discuss the Resolution. In behalf of the American delegation he wished to say that he stood for the Resolution, not because it expressed the Hoover Proposals, but because the last straggler could stand upon it—and unanimity of agreement was essential. Who were the "stragglers"? Why, they could not be any other than Britain, France and Japan. As a matter of fact, the Resolution proved to be a divider rather than a unifier. But, what disturbed me was that the American delegation had spiked its guns before hearing a debate from others; also should find itself voting two or three times flatly against distinct and important portions of the Hoover Proposals; also, should have taken advantage of a ruling of the Chair to enter upon debate while others were forbidden. I am puzzled to know whether it was cleverness or dullness that lead Mr. Gibson to do this.

The Resolution was discussed in four long sessions, covering three days. Litvinoff was the first speaker on Thursday. He said that he could not approve of it because it did not go far enough. He would prefer

to accept the Hoover Proposals or to go still further and provide for total and general disarmament. The last speaker was Herriot, on Saturday, when he emphasized that along with the outlawry of war there should go the outlawry of the aggressor. Simon had just said that the Resolution marked the progress of the Conference, along with the promise of concrete substantial reductions of arms in the future.

The Hoover Proposals were praised and really voted for in several amendments, but Gibson had to confess that he would vote for the Resolution, as it was all he was able to get.

What will become of the Hoover Proposals? Just about what became of the Wilson 14 Points, that under the careful training of expert florists like Clemenceau and Lloyd George, blossomed into the Versailles Treaty. Under the expert care of Messrs. Benes, Simon, Boncour, and Company, they will, I fear, blossom into a protracted seance on disarmament, indulging in fair promises and bold assertions of accepted truths. And how can we expect anything else when the very fact of the nations being *armed* provides a situation that necessarily involves an irreconcilable conflict. Of course, Yen of China got up and said that his vote for the Resolution and future collaboration with the Conference depended upon developments affecting his country, that even of late had suffered from bombing, of "civilian" population. Of course, Nadolny of Germany arose and said that his country (one of the great peoples of earth) could not collaborate except on the basis of equality. Of course, Balbo of Italy arose and said that his country wished to go further than "declaration of good will and would abstain from voting until he saw some positive results." And, what is more to the point, these and other nations will arise and say the same things six months from now—as long, as the nations are *armed*. There must be not only an outlawry of war and of the aggressor, but also an outlawry of *arms*. Until this is recognized and especially as long as unjust treaties hold and as long as there are so-called Big Powers—peace and security will be as elusive as fire-flies.

A Permanent Disarmament Commission. This is what the Resolution provides for. I wish to repeat, that this is something to avoid. Set up at the League of Nations—as the clever are planning—it will mean control of the destinies of the nations by the same few nations that control the Council—and, for years to come. These Big Powers care more for getting that than they do for securing a reduction in arms—in fact, in the latter they are not much and sincerely interested. If the Conference should hang over for a year, or even two years—with no "substantial" reduction of armaments, it will not keep the Big Powers awake a wink. In fact, would it surprise you if vacations and delays and elections and revolutions were regarded as special Providences, to be gratefully taken advantage of, so that a few Powers might dominate in the name of law and order? . . . More of this later.

As I sat through the long sessions of the Conference—and be it known that this is not a conference, but a body whose chief work is to okey what the Bureau headed by Benes, after private conversations especially among a few big Powers, sets before the delegates with little real debate, to be okeyed. I found myself often saying, What a pity! I was constantly driven into a mood not of pessimism or cynicism (never that) but of sorrow.

When I witnessed Nadolny's demand for equality for the great German nation rejected, I exclaimed, what a pity! When I witnessed Litvinoff's offer to subscribe to the Hoover Proposals not only but to go up to general disarmament rejected, I said what a pity! When I saw Herriot and Simon with great solemnity bury the Hoover Proposals, in a bed of roses and promises, I said, what a pity! When I witnessed these same two men and other leaders working strenuously for a few crumbs, I said, what a pity, that they do not instead sweat for bread that will feed the starving peoples; that such high talent should not be working for real disarmament. When I saw Henderson at the close become a partisan (a chairman should be neutral) and make a fallacious but effective plea for the Resolution, and was properly rebuked by Nadolny, I said, what a pity!

When I saw the Resolution erected and championed by leaders of the peoples as pointing the way to world peace—while meanwhile better roads were rejected—I almost cried aloud, what a pity! And, a line from childhood memory came, that hell is paved with good intentions—and, this was not even a *good* resolution! If "war is hell"—I fear that Hell is making merry over the Resolution that took six months to produce, and is preparing in its factories new inventions in gases and guns for earth's inhabitants!

When the Resolution was approved, I felt as I did when President Wilson in heroic words of high promise led America into the War. I said, what a pity! Just as I felt when, after the promises of the 14 Points, the Versailles Treaty put the nations into chains, I said, what a pity!

I felt the same when I witnessed the Passion Play of Oberammergau—that the leaders and multitudes should follow Annas, should heed Pilate, should choose Barabbas, should reject the Best—leaving his raiment to be divided and gambled for by soldiers—what a pity! I went back to "Mary's house" at Oberammergau, that evening, not in cynicism or pessimism, but feeling that I had entered into a Great Sorrow, that was a revelation of life. But, what a pity!

It was the same that noon-time when I walked away from the Peace Passion Play of Geneva. As I went along Quai Wilson, the green waters of the Lake, over the long bridge, from which one can look up and see the eternal Mt. Blanc and look down upon the ever-flowing Rhone, and so on up the hill to my room, I kept saying, what a pity! Nothing but a Resolution—an empty tomb perhaps! Yet, the Eternal was in that Glass-room offering to the leaders of the people the justice of equality and the security of total disarmament. What a pity!

Yet, through it all shines out clearer than ever the truth that nations *cannot* have peace while they are *armed*. The Resolution is patent evidence of that fact. The nations are inevitably headed for a deadlock. They must *disarm*. This means that Britain, France, America and Japan—chief offenders—must *disarm*. Let their people understand, that until they do, they are a *menace* to mankind.

Must history repeat itself? So far as I can see, there is only one way to avert disaster. It is the road of *immediate total disarmament*, along with what it implies and involves, namely *justice and equality*.

SYDNEY STRONG.

American Express, Geneva, Switzerland.

Unitarianism and Contemporary Life

[NOTE: The ousting of Rev. Raymond H. Palmer from the pulpit of the Unitarian Church in Lynn, Massachusetts, has led to sustained discussion in these columns. This is partly because Mr. Palmer is an honored editorial associate on our staff, partly because UNITY is the only paper which has been willing to give fair hearing to as clear an issue of free speech in religion as the present time has known. This discussion has now brought us the two remarkable articles printed below—one written by Mr. Palmer himself, the other by a layman of distinction. Here Unitarianism is caught between the withering cross-fire of pulpit and pew. Our columns are open to replies which contain information and are written in good spirit.—EDITOR.]

I. A Layman Speaks

In the July 18th issue of UNITY there was a letter written by the Rev. Homer Lewis Sheffer of Oklahoma City, in which he relates his liberal and inspirational experience in Athol, Massachusetts, and in which he confesses a common interest with Raymond H. Palmer, of the staff of UNITY. This letter interested me very much because I am well acquainted with both Raymond H. Palmer and Athol, Massachusetts. So well acquainted, in fact, that I am moved to present the other side of the picture which Dr. Sheffer does not say anything about, either because, no doubt, he is too kind to speak ill of the dead (Unitarianism), or because being no longer in Athol, he can remember only the hours that shine.

Dr. Sheffer, who came from the Reformed (Dutch) Church, had his first taste of Unitarianism when he occupied the Unitarian pulpit in Athol from 1926 to 1928. He says this first taste was very pleasant and that the Athol congregation was most sympathetic. To Athol he spoke the truth and he left in 1928 for Oklahoma City.

It is possible to speak the truth from an Athol pulpit—for a while. If a man does it, one of three things will happen to him; he will be ignored and laughed at as "That queer minister who is always saying funny things"; or he will have to adopt a mesmeric, soothing bedside manner when prescribing his pills of truth so that the people won't know what they're getting (what they don't know won't hurt them); or he'll have to be outspoken regardless of what the public wants, in which case he'll get kicked out at once. In either of the first two ways of succeeding in Athol, this town will tolerate a minister who speaks the truth but carries a soft manner or who speaks the truth because he's slightly cracked. In either case he's harmless. It's only in the last case that he becomes intolerable. I know. I lived for several years in this small factory town of ten thousand souls. There for the first time in my life I joined a church—the Unitarian. And there I got my first taste of what passes for free religion in America, a taste so strong and unpleasant that from that day to this I have never wanted to set my foot in another free church.

All this is most logical, and easy to understand. Athol is the typical small town spewed up by the machine age; the age of mass production, mass thinking and mass domination. Athol is a squalid, smoke-veneered mass of factories and sprawling habitations along a muddy river bank in western Massachusetts. Once, in the eighteenth century, it was a charming country village on the hill, a village of fine old Georgian houses that Dr. Sheffer would have admired, and a spacious green Common with its elms and maples. The factory changed all this. In the nineteenth century, the town raced pell-mell down the hill into a hole to meet the railroad and soon the factories sprang up very thick along the river. Athol became, instead of a quiet village where people had decent homes and the amenities of life, a hustling, boosting small city, full of noise and confusion, smoke and seven o'clock factory whistles. Athol had made "progress". And Athol made for itself squalid homes, squalid people and squalid thinking.

Athol is dependent largely on several machine, tool, and novelty factories. The people in town who do not work in the mills, make their living taking in the washings of those who do—attending to their physical and sometimes spiritual wants. As the factory prospers, so prospers Athol. As the factory has a heart that pulsates, so pulsate the hearts of Athol people. Obviously, in such a place the social lines are most strictly drawn. On top are the owners and operators of the mills, and their children, grandchildren, in-laws and other relations. The youngsters are, when possible, put through the best schools and colleges. Then they join the best secret and fraternal organizations and golf clubs and look like somebody. In Athol they associate with the bankers, professional men and the few families who live off coupon clipping—but most of their guests are from out of town. This high society in Athol maintains a worried isolation from the factory workers, tradesmen and other low persons. This society's sole criterion of intelligence, culture and position is money. The minds of its members are quantity minds. Such minds believe anything and everything can be bought for money or turned out serially by mass production. Regardless of how the recent economic unpleasantness has knocked this idea into a cocked hat, these people still cling to the only philosophy they know.

Americans of this class, only recently come into wealth and power (their grandfathers started the mills as little machine shops and were not too proud to work), must needs surround themselves with all the gadgets of culture. They donate libraries, erect municipal centers, buy antique furniture, support ministers, join churches and form literary clubs in order to discuss book reviews. They are in a position to buy anything they want; thus they can erect a beautiful Georgian Church and put a well brought up, behaved minister into it (Dr. Sheffer speaks with pride of the beautiful Georgian Church they erected in Oklahoma City—one of the list of Unitarian Churches, by the way, which is known as a missionary church. The Association is obliged to support it to the tune of $1,500 a year). Some of these people go to church on Sunday but most of them play golf or bridge instead. Yet

all are most eager to *support* some kind of church with money. Money will buy anything—even salvation. I shall never forget how I happened to join the Unitarian Church. One of the leading merchants met me on the street. He said the Unitarians were having a drive to get new members, in order to raise a fund to do something with, I forget what. I was then a business man in town, and this pillar of the community said I should join to help them out—with the fund. I asked him if I had to *do* anything; make a public confession, kneel in front of the congregation, be dipped in a baptismal tank or go to church. No, he said, I had to do none of these things. All I must do was just sign a card and give him a cheque. This I did. I signed a card and gave him some money. I became a Unitarian.

But to get back to Dr. Sheffer. The Athol atmosphere, the atmosphere of a money dominated, wholly rootless, quantity-minded group of small town people who want culture, salvation, and social position over the counter and who ache for the embellishments of refinement and education, is responsible for giving Dr. Sheffer a very happy first taste of Unitarianism. Since Dr. Sheffer likes the Unitarian religion (he confesses he will remain a Unitarian minister until the end of his days), he could not have picked a better town than Athol, Massachusetts, to get acquainted with it. For in Athol, and in all places of similar atmosphere, Unitarianism will flourish. It will flourish because it is the moribund glimmer of the glory that was New England —and these newly, culture-seeking rich are terribly past conscious. (Even though many had grandfathers who quit Ireland because of the potato famine in 1840 to become pick and shovel men building the Fitchburg railroad, they are all wrapped up in their good old New England ancestry.) It will thrive because such people as are in Athol want something which ties up with the past and with big names (Emerson, Channing, Parker, et al.). They want something which is safe and sane for "nice" people. They want something which has a liberal face but a weak back. They want something which requires only lip-service and cash contributions. They want something which entails no sacrifice, embarrassment or participation.

Contemporary Unitarianism fills every one of these wants and thus it is the most perfect form of religion ever devised for the kind of people who want it. It gives such people the mild reputation for being classed as liberals, so they can look down on the cruder and less subtle Methodists and Baptists—but not liberals enough to interfere with their business. Unitarianism is perfectly suited to the small town New England business and industrial man because it is in harmony with the economic system of this kind of man; the system of being clever and sharp in a nice way. The old hell-fire and brimstone religions of our forefathers were strong enough to scare the New England sharpers in their tooth and claw competition. It was the only thing that kept them down—they were scared to death of hell and the vengeance of the Old Testament God. Unitarianism has none of this. It is as effective and lashing as a mother's whispered threat to her five year old boy. It is perfectly suited to the modern business and industrial crusader, because there is nothing in it to make him scared and it requires no burning manifestation of faith. If great religions were founded and grew on the brotherhood of man, altruism and love, it is easy to see what sort of people will thrive on Unitarianism.

I doubt if a first-rate man could possibly succeed in the Unitarian Church today—and be honest and fearless. There are exceptions, of course—but in an atmosphere like that of Athol, Raymond Palmer (whose article prompted Dr. Sheffer's defense of official Unitarianism) would have refused to succeed. He would have had to speak the unvarnished truth there as he has elsewhere. In Athol he would have spoken it with such force and directness that not a single Atholite could have ignored him or called him crazy. He would have spoken it without cultivating the ingratiating bedside manner of the successful preacher, so there would never have been any doubt of where he stood. In both cases he would straightway have been kicked out of the Unitarian pulpit in Athol. For truth is not pleasant. It is not something nice to be handed around like sweet-cakes at a Ladies Sewing Circle tea. Unitarians in Athol want their ministers to say pleasant things—the things that won't disturb a Ladies Sewing Circle tea. I remember a charming Unitarian pastor in Athol many years ago who was much liked because he read nice soothing poems on Sundays and never criticized. And there was another who was liberal, people said, because he actually attended baseball games, played whist and smoked cigarettes. No, truth is not comforting, and the Unitarians want comforting sermons. If they can't get them, then they will get another pastor—are they not paying him to give them what they want? They go to church to be comforted, and hear about God. Not about their own lives. At least the chairman of the board of trustees in the Lynn Unitarian Church stated this was the major crime Raymond Palmer had committed in Lynn, Massachusetts —the crime of not preaching comforting sermons and of not being a comforting kind of fellow. No, Raymond Palmer could never have succeeded in Athol.

Because there are so many Athols—America is a country of Athols—I am very much afraid that Unitarianism is as dead as a door nail. A great religion not only needs great leaders—it needs a great audience. For the past decade I have been associated in New York and elsewhere with literary people and people engaged in the creative arts. I have known many of the people we term leaders in intellectual movements. I have known the very kind of men that Dr. Sheffer says have the best minds—the people whose best thought Dr. Sheffer tried to bring to his congregation. No one will deny that the men he mentions—H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell, Edward Dean Martin, Walter Lippman and James Harvey Robinson may be included amongst the best minds who are giving us the best thought of the day. To such men the world must turn for the meaning of ideals and the interpretation of knowledge. They are the men who should lead.

Then why aren't they Unitarians? Why, I often used to ask, are not the leading liberals of America active Unitarians? One may as well ask, why is not Bertrand Russell a member of the Ku Klux Klan, or why is not H. G. Wells an Elk? The truth of the matter is, there is no possible connection between liberalism and the Unitarian Church today. The idea of Unitarianism was a wonderful idea. So was the idea of democracy. But where are they working? As I see it, Unitarianism was a movement hatched more as a cultural revolt from a dead past than anything else. Its ideals were splendid. Its original leaders were

great. But Unitarianism has produced few if any great leaders except its own founders. It has uttered few great thoughts except theirs. It has attracted few great liberals except them. It has produced, in the main, only propagandists, doctrinaires and followers. The Unitarian Church is a convenient catch-all for the intellectual who seeks an ecclesiastical refuge. Its advocates say they have the highest percentage of members in *Who's Who.* Of course they do. But how many of these *Who's Who* Unitarians go to church and feel for the ideals of the church? When asked to give data for *Who's Who,* most celebrities who are liberal but do not want to hurt the feelings of a maiden aunt or an old mother, want to put down some religion. So they put down Unitarian. The nearest they can get to no religion from their own point of view is Unitarianism. It sounds like something to most people, but to real liberals it is nothing.

Dr. Sheffer says: "I have tried in a rather unoriginal way to bring to my people the best thought of our age." I wonder if Dr. Sheffer realized to what he is confessing. He is confessing, it seems to me, to one of the greatest faults of the Unitarian brotherhood. These gentlemen try to bring to their people the best thought of the age, in a rather unoriginal way. The best thought of the age does not seem to penetrate to Unitarians *direct.* It has to be brought to them, on Sunday. It comes in convenient packages like the book of the month. And it has to be brought in an unoriginal way. Of course I realize that Dr. Sheffer's confession was due to his modesty, but there is no doubt that the Unitarians prefer a rather unoriginal way. Original thought, like truth, is unpleasant to the secure. Original thought is just as much out of place in the Unitarian Church as it is in a machine-tender in an Athol nut factory. The Athol factory owner wants the machine tender efficiently to feed metal to the stamping machine to make nuts. He doesn't want him to experiment. He doesn't want him to think. Athol people want their ministers to go on feeding the public soothing pills to purge melancholy. They don't want them to experiment. They don't want them to think. They don't want them to stir things up by throwing in original thoughts, or by bringing the best thought of our age in an original way. That would be like throwing a monkey wrench into the stamping machine. That won't make good nuts.

VREST ORTON.

II—A Clergyman Speaks

A well-known Universalist clergyman, head of the Universalist Publishing Society, committed suicide this past summer, charged with speculation and loss of many thousands of dollars committed to his charge for denominational work.

Discouraging events of this kind have become not uncommon in Unitarian-Universalist circles, and one wonders whether the explanation does not lie in a general moral collapse in the administrative affairs of these so-called liberal churches.

Thus, a little more than a year ago the administrative secretary of the Unitarian Laymen's League was discovered to have misused nearly $10,000 of the funds of his local church, of which he had been the treasurer. Not long after that unpleasant disclosure, it was found that the treasurer of the Pacific Unitarian School for the Ministry had so used the funds of that institution as to render it almost financially impotent.

It is doubtful whether any church body in America has ever shown so disgraceful a record of administrative dishonesty as that with which the recently formed Free Churches of America (Unitarian-Universalist) makes it bow. In two years' time these two religious bodies, both of them very small, have had three major cases of malfeasance in the high offices of the church.

It is still more alarming when one reflects upon the fact that these cases were in no way related to one another. Each was a separate case. And the alarm is further increased when one considers that all this has happened in religious bodies which have been, in the past, recognized for their strict integrity and adherence to the moral law.

There will be many to express surprise that such things have taken place among the honorable gentlemen who have been entrusted with the leadership of the liberal churches of America. But why be surprised? Is there anybody who sees clearly, who is conversant with the facts, whose conscience is still alive, who does not know that, on the whole, liberal religion is administered in America by a group of weaklings? I do not accuse such men as one finds in charge of affairs, for example, at the national headquarters of the Unitarian church in Boston, of rank dishonesty. But I do accuse them of weakness, of moral cowardice, of subtle evasion of moral issues when these issues arise in the course of the church's affairs. Do these officers ever face an issue squarely, fight it out in the open, render unequivocal moral judgments, and manifest the qualities of spiritual leadership which people have a right to expect in the presidents and vice-presidents of a body such as the Unitarian church?

I speak more particularly of the Unitarian church because that is the one of these two bodies with which I happen to be somewhat familiar. I state it upon the authority of one who is trying to be transparently honest, who has no political ax to grind, who is not seeking a single favor from the liberal church of any kind or description, but who does have a passion for the principles that church is supposed to espouse; and I state without fear of successful contradiction that the atmosphere in which the affairs of the Unitarian church are today conducted is an atmosphere which breeds dishonesty, discourages men who would be bold and brave in their exposure of wrong, and encourages those who would use this great movement for a free faith to further their own selfish ends.

No wonder Unitarianism today has so many dishonest administrators and so few prophetic preachers. Any preacher who undertakes to be courageous in his utterances, and to attack evil without eqivocation, speaking in plain terms about concrete problems, will, when he gets into trouble with *influential* laymen in his churches, find himself shamefully deserted by official Unitarianism, and not only shamefully deserted but actually opposed by the operation of the official machine in ways of trickery that are not outdone by our national political conventions.

Such a preacher will find, for example, that, as soon as he has lost a pulpit in a fight having to do entirely with moral principles which he has sought to uphold in a dignified yet courageous manner, his pulpit will be occupied at once by the officials of the Unitarian church, that they will bring aid and comfort to the very persons who have denied him the right to speak the truth as he sees it, that while they are thus giving succor to his enemies, these same officials will

carefully avoid any act that could possibly be interpreted as favorable to the preacher who is in trouble, and that, furthermore, while all this is being done, these same officials will repeatedly deny any expert knowledge of the affair, will scrupulously avoid making any moral judgments about the matter, and will act solely and entirely in the capacity of official fixers on the *winning* side.

In other words it will be found that the officials of the Unitarian church today do not show by their acts that they consider themselves in any sense guardians of the principles upon which this church is supposed to be founded, that they will not openly support a man who does not equivocate with those principles, but that they are concerned altogether with the amelioration of administrative difficulties in a way that will retain the support of those from whom they expect to seek and obtain favors for the denomination, which of course means in part for themselves.

In such an atmosphere two things are bound to happen, and they are happening. Prophetic preachers will be ostracised. Dishonest officials and clergymen will be encouraged. This is no blanket charge against the Unitarian clergy. But it is a warning to those of them who care. Unless they can manage to clean house, thoroughly and quickly, their cause is doomed. There will not be many to cry out in anguish about the business as I do here, for that is not the way of life. No. What will happen, and what, indeed, is happening, will be that the liberals of this land (and we must remember that liberals do not come solely through inheritance) will cease entirely to look to the Unitarian church for leadership. A careful reader will pick up all through the literature of the day, in novels and in essays, sly digs at Unitarianism which reveal clearly to a discerning mind the shift in enlightened public opinion away from Unitarianism. For example, let anyone who cares to do so cull from Van Wyck Brook's recent biography of Emerson the many remarks on Unitarianism which are scattered through the book. Put together, they make the picture that is in that writer's mind regarding this church. It is not a complimentary picture. It is an ironical, distrustful one. Nor is Mr. Brooks alone in this. Unitarianism is not heralded by free and original minds today as the torch of liberalism. Wherever it is mentioned, when it is not passed over in respectful silence, it is spoken of either with sly reproach, biting satire or historical detachment. Does anyone know of a single passage in current literature really enthusiastically favorable to Unitarianism, one that has been written by a writer of high literary standing? It ought to be plain to us all that since the passing of Samuel McChord Crothers there is no writer of distinction who can be said to be laboring for the Unitarian church. Certainly it is not true that none of them is interested in the principles which have long been associated with this church. Quite the contrary, as I see it. For it is their interest in the principles which causes their lack of faith in a church which neglects those principles while claiming them for its own.

I should not write as I do here were it not for the fact that I am deep in mind and heart a churchman. I have little interest in purely materialistic liberalism, less than that in a scattered and inarticulate liberal opinion. I believe that no body of opinion becomes powerful and germinative until it takes on something of the nature of a religion, organizes itself into something in the nature of a church, with a spiritual message and a far-flung brotherhood and battle-line. Unitarianism as it is today, with its petty, selfish officials and its indifferent laity and its corrupt administrators and its surrendered clergy gives no promise of a great Free Church of America. Yet if America is ever to be saved from the kind of moral collapse we saw so brazenly on exhibition at Chicago during the late political conventions, it will be religion, the religion of free, noble and unselfish spirits, strongly organized and bound in the bonds of freedom, that will do it. In behalf of the reclamation of the soul of America, is there not some way to reclaim the liberal church from the shadow of indifference and neglect?

RAYMOND H. PALMER.

The Field

(*Continued from page* 338)

the C. class; Mrs. Jamnalal has been very ill. Most tragic of all is the thought that the few precious years remaining of the Mahatma's own life are being lost to the world. The one man who could bring peace; the one man who, as an Indian Editor said to me, can get the British forgiven by the India they have wronged; the only man who can deliver the goods in the spheres alike of politics or of social reconstruction, is silenced.

(3) A third point is one which it is very painful for an Englishman to have to make. Never has the prestige of Britain sunk so low as during the last few months. On this point there is universal agreement. "No one now trusts an Englishman," said a leading Liberal to me the other day. "England's reputation for justice and fair play has totally collapsed," remarked another. "England has now thrown off all pretense of being a Christian nation," said a third. There can hardly be a greater humiliation than to be an Englishman in India today. The methods used to crush the Congress —the inequalities of our justice; the almost unbelievable pettiness of our dealings, the brutalities of our police and prison administration have shaken the faith of even our most staunch admirers. I am a great lover of my country, and it is the keenest misery to write these things; but it is necessary that you should know how you are being betrayed by your fellow-countrymen in India. In the interests of big business and of beaurocratic prestige, the name of England—the fair name of liberty and honor—is being dragged in the dust.

(4) Nothing has contributed more to the collapse of our prestige than the failure of Government to handle the present Bombay riots. These so-called communal riots, so far from being an indication that India is not fit for self-government, are a glaring example of the incapacity of British bayonets to preserve law and order. A national Government, responsible to the will of the people, could have stopped the riots with little difficulty. But here in Bombay the conclusion has been almost irresistible that Government has not wanted the riots to stop. Maulana Shaukat Ali, at a time when thousands of inoffensive citizens are in jail as a "menace to the public safety," has been given full freedom to preach a gospel of bloodshed and revenge. There are countless instances (I have myself examined several eye-witnesses) where the police have made no attempt to save the lives or property of the people, but have stood by watching while murder was done. There is no adequate justice on the rioters. For the peaceful picketing of a liquor shop a man is given six months' rigorous imprisonment; for rioting and possessing a murderous knife he is fined five rupees and allowed to go free. The history of the riots reveals a carefully planned and well-financed scheme of action, directed by one controlling agency. The riots are not the natural result of communal tension; they are the hateful fruit of a policy of "Divide and Rule."

(5) I believe in the conscience of my people. I believe that if the people of England realized what was being done in their name in India, they would demand in the cause of truth and honor an immediate reversal of the present policy of the India Office, and the exposure of those who have encouraged Communal hatred in an attempt to discredit India in the eyes

of the world. They would also insist on the abandonment of brute force and what can only be called by the ugly name of torture for the suppression of a non-violent and peaceful political movement. Where the whole world is turning in disgust from the methods of force to those of conciliation and arbitration, England is going back on the progress of civilization. A few months ago I visited Mrs. Molital Nehru in her magnificent house in Allahabad, and I well remember the impression almost as of awe which this tiny fragile old lady, with her sweet dignity and graciousness, made upon me. The other day she was beaten by a great lusty policeman as she was leading a peaceful procession through the streets of the city. A few days ago, Jamnalalji's aged mother was turned out of her house at five in the morning. The old mother of a peasant near Lucknow was beaten by the police with the butt-ends of their rifles. Our treatment of Indian women, and even of boys young enough to be called children, have made me ashamed.

The wife of an Indian Christian Principal of a missionary college said to me the other day, "What is the use of English people coming to India to preach Christianity when their country is violating every principle of the Gospel in its dealings with us?" India cannot hear the words of the Gospel of Christ for the noise of the lathi blows and the clank of prison fetters; the deeds of a "Christian" nation speak louder than its words.

How cowardly our rule appears in India today! It is like some bulking bully stamping upon lovely and defenseless birds. We are indeed crushing and maiming something far more valuable and important than India's national consciousness; we are breaking a friendliness which we need and which should be ours, a patience which has borne much but cannot endure forever.

Negro Discusses Disarmament at Geneva

William Pickens (of N. A. A. C. P.-69, 5th Ave., New York), on vacation tour in Europe, was asked to address the general Committee, representing various American Peace and International societies, in the International Club. Among other things he said:

"The only logical result of the outlawry of war must be total disarmament—not a reduction in arms. If disarmament cannot be effected, then the Kellogg Pact cannot be effective. Those who honestly adopted the Pact, should find it easy also to adopt the only means on earth for making the proclamation effective. If we agreed not to behead or hang each other any longer, it should be easy for us to agree to abolish the guillotine and gallows—and not to build any new ones.

"To agree merely not to threaten each other any longer with heavy armaments has no relation to peace, although it may have some slight effect on our economic condition. If two individual enemies agree no longer to carry rifles against each other, but to carry only automatic pistols, it cannot be denied that they have lessened their own burdens, but they have hardly increased their own relative security, and have not in the least established trust or friendship. Even if a pistol be a little less dangerous, it is not a bit better evidence of friendship.

"After all, it makes very little difference to the dead, whether they are killed by battleships or cruisers; by machine guns or poison gas. It seems to the ordinary lay mind like nonsense to engage in long and serious discussions as to just in what manner we shall kill each other; whether we shall blow each other into little pieces or simply send one neat bullet through each other's hearts. What method or means is used for a murder, whether chemical or physical, crude or scientific, makes absolutely no difference with the body of the murdered, and very little difference with the soul of the murderer.

"Some will admit this, but will rejoin that the best way to reach total abolition of military armaments, is to take it in easy stages, little by little. In such a process, it is only the last stage of abolishment that is really effective; all preceding partial measures are economic waste, for they are just as expensive. It is worse than that: those partial measures set us back each time: for in them we continually cheat ourselves with the belief that we have really accomplished something great, when we have accomplished little or nothing. It would be better economy all through, if all the effort and expense put into various schemes for partial disarmament, or qualitative disarmament, were expended in a drive for final and total disarmament.

"The timid logic of the step-by-step philosophy reminds us of the logic of the man who decided to remove his dog's tail by cutting off an inch every ten days, rather than to sever the whole tail at once. It seemed so merciful and humane to give each wound a chance to heal up before inflicting the next one. The dog objected just as much at the last cutting; or perhaps more at the last because of the memory of the preceding ones.

"There is every good and sensible reason why the black races of the world should agree with those who want not only the technical outlawry of war, but its actual abolishment through total disarmament; for there is every evidence that in all future great wars the black man-power of Africa is going to be one of the greatest sources for the supply of '*cannon fodder.*'"

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